

THE

643.b.16
8

CARMELITE:

A

TRAGEDY.

PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE ROYAL

DRURY LANE.

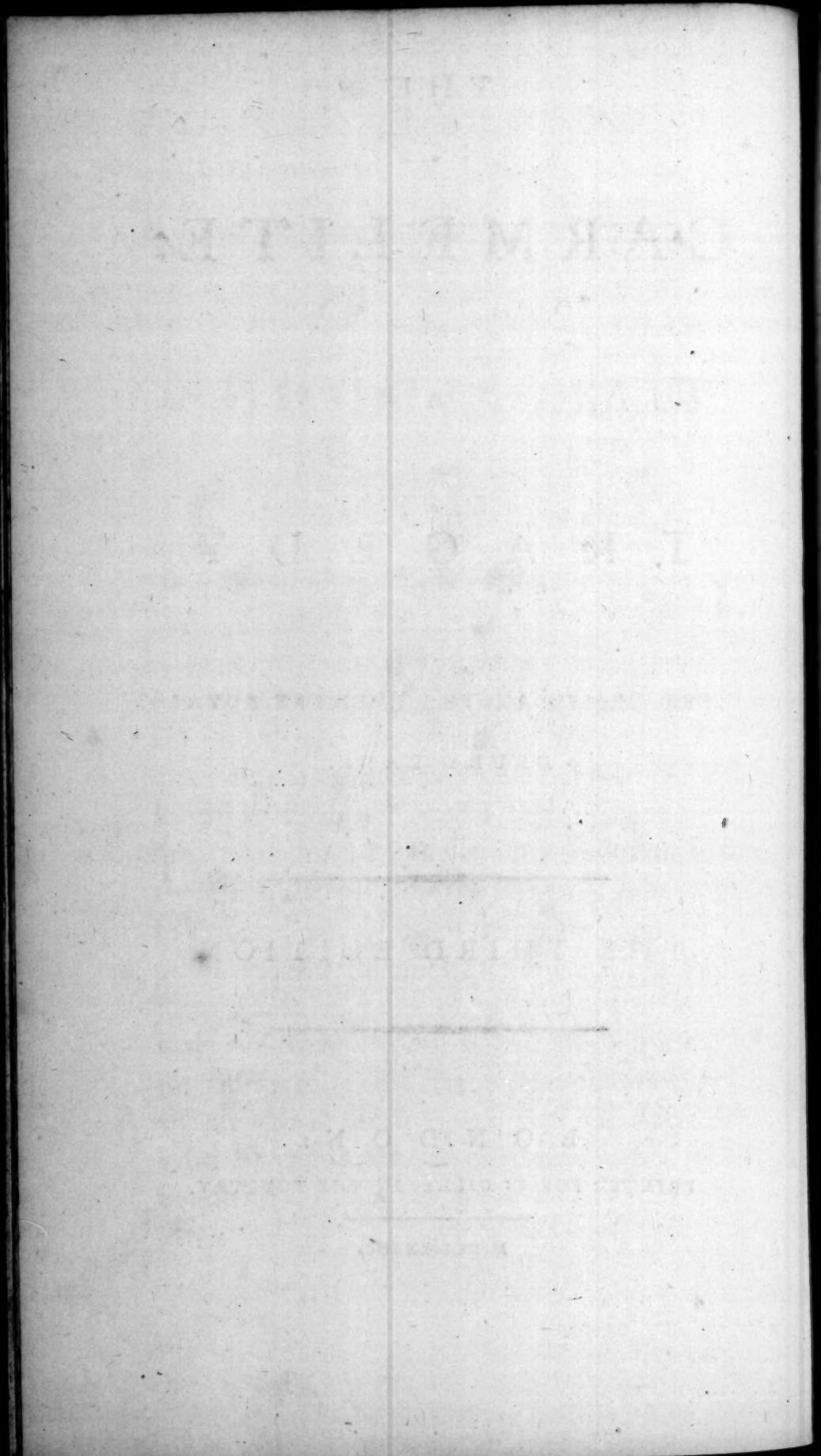
By Richd Cumberland. *h*

THE THIRD EDITION.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR C. DILLY, IN THE POULTRY.

M.DCC.LXXXV.



To Mrs. SIDDONS.

M A D A M,

I Cannot commit this Tragedy to the press without availing myself of the opportunity to acknowledge the support you gave it on the stage. I felt myself under the weight of a responsibility during its trial before the Public, which made those moments extremely anxious; for had I been adjudged guilty of misemploying your talents, I must have sunk under the sentence without appeal, conscious of having conceived the fable, and addressed every feature and expression of the prevailing character professedly to you: in short there was no possible shelter for self-prejudice (had that been amongst my failings) to resort to, where all the Performers stood so ably in the scene, and where the spectacle was so fully

iv DEDICATION.

furnished by the liberality of the Proprietors, that I can honestly declare my endeavours, antecedent to the exhibition, had not been employed to urge their spirit to expence, but on the contrary to restrain it.

I am deeply grateful to a generous and candid Audience for their reception of this Tragedy; and though I am not to learn how much of their applause rests personally with you and your associates in the cast, I am no less penetrated with a sense of the favours I am to transfer to others, than of those which I may be permitted to retain to myself.

The character of our Drama in its best examples is so close to Nature, that you, Madam, who are apt to give so perfect a reflection of her image, seem born for the elevation of the British stage. The Author, who shall write for you, must copy from no other model but Nature; every thing must be addressed to the spectator's heart, and of course must flow from his own; artificial situations, tricking incidents and studied declamations, must be thrown aside where you are to appear; it will not be his aim to make you loquacious

DEDICATION.

v

in the scene, because he has such fine recitation to resort to, nor will he call you out into starts and attitudes, merely because he has a form so striking to display at his command ; glittering passages and traps for plaudits will be beneath his attention ; he will lead simplicity in his hand, and keep sublimity in his eye.

To such a Poet may I now confign you !— Yet before I make over so valuable a conveyance, let me apprise him of the extent of his good fortune ; and that it is not only in the public representation of his scenes where he will find your importance, but in every stage of the business preparatory to their exhibition. To add one voice to a multitude is a small tribute to your talents ; but to bear testimony to your zeal, diligence, and punctuality in all those duties of your profession, which, though of equal moment, are of less notoriety, falls first to my lot ; and if my successor shall feel these offices as sensibly as I do, he will acknowledge stronger reasons to esteem you for the good qualities originating with yourself, than for the brilliant gifts which you derive from nature.

Proceed

Proceed in your course, and depend upon a generous Public. It would be living to an evil purpose indeed, if it were for no other purpose but to depress them we live with ; and your contemporaries will not fail to see how much it is their concern to foster and protect a genius, which contributes to render their own times and their own country superior to all others.

I have the honour to be,

MADAM,

Your most faithful and

most obedient Servant,

London,
Dec. 6, 1784.

Rich^d Cumberland.

PROLOGUE

P R O L O G U E

By the A U T H O R.

Spoken by Mr. P A L M E R.

OLD Drury's dock prepares a launch this night,
 New from the keel, (fair speed The Carmelite !)
True British-built, and from the Tragic slip ;
She mounts great guns—tho' not a first-rate ship :
A gallant Knight commands, of ancient fame
And Norman blood, Saint Valori his name ;
On his main-top the Christian Cross he bears,
From Holy Land he comes, and Pagan wars :
Twenty long years his lady mourns him dead,
And bathes with faithful tears a widow'd bed ;
Our scene presents him ship-wreck'd on her coast—
No sign, we hope, our venture will be lost.

Yet bold the Bard, to mount ambition's wave,
And launch his wit upon a watery grave ;
Sharp critic rocks beneath him lie in wait,
And envious quicksands bar the Muse's straight ;
Wild o'er his head Detraction's billows break,
Doubt chills his heart, and terror pales his cheek :
Hungry and faint, what cordials can he bring
From the cold nymph of the Pierian spring ?
What stores collect from bare Parnassus' head,
Where blooms no vineyard, where no beeves are fed ?
And great Apollo's laurels, which impart
Fame to his head, are famine to his heart.—

Yet on he toils, and eager bends his eyes,
Where Fame's bright temple glitters to the skies.,
Ah, Sirs, 'tis easy work, to sit on shore
And tutor him who tugs the labouring oar :
Whilst he amidst the surging ocean steers,
Now here, now there, as fashion's current veers :
Rouse, rouse for his protection ! you, who sit
Rang'd in deep phalanx, arbiters of wit !
And you aloft there, keep your beacon bright,
Oh, make your Eddy-stone shew forth it's light ;
So shall our Bard steer to its friendly blaze,
And anchor in the haven of your praise.

Dramatis Personæ.

SAINT VALORI (the Carmelite)	Mr. SMITH.
LORD HILDEBRAND, —	Mr. PALMER.
LORD DE COURCI, —	Mr. AICKIN.
MONTGOMERI, —	Mr. KEMBLE.
GYFFORD, —	Mr. PACKER.
FITZ-ALLAN, —	Mr. PHILLIMORE.
RAYMOND, —	Mr. FAUCETT.

MATILDA, the Lady of St. Valori, **Mrs. SIDDONS.**
Attendants, &c.

Time, that of the Representation.

THE

THE
CARMELITE:

A

TRAGEDY.

A C T I.

SCENE I.

A rocky Shore, with a View of the Sea, at Break of Day.

Fitz-Allan and Raymond meeting.

RAYMOND.

WELL met, Fitz-Allan; what's the time of day?

FITZ-ALLAN.

Broad morning by the hour.

RAYMOND.

Sleeps the sun yet?

Or has the stormy south, that howls so loud,
Blown out his untrimm'd lamp, and left us here

B

To

2 THE CARMELITE:

To be witch-ridden by this hag of night,
Out of time's natural course?

FITZ-ALLAN.

Methinks the winds,
Which peal'd like thunder thro' Glendarlock's
towers,
Have lower'd their note a pitch; the flecker'd
clouds,
Lifting their misty curtain in the east,
Unmask the weeping day.

Enter Montgomeri *hastily*.

MONTGOMERI.

Oh, are you men?
Have you less mercy than the winds and waves,
That you stand here aloof?

FITZ-ALLAN.

Why, what has chanc'd?

MONTGOMERI.

A noble vessel breaks upon the rocks,
That jut from old Dunnoe's rugged base;
And as the floating fragments drive ashore
Our plund'ring islanders (convert their hearts,
Holy St. Michael!) dash the drowning wretches
From the poor wreck they cling to, and engulph
them
Quick in the boiling waves: by Heav'n that made
me
I cou'd forswear my nature, when I see
Man so degenerate!

RAYMOND.

Lo! we are ready:
Lead to the beach.

MONTGOMERI.

A T R A G E D Y.

3

MONTGOMERI.

Alas ! 'tis now too late :

I had not left it but that all was lost :
The element had mercy ; man had none.
Two I have sav'd ; the one a Carmelite,
Noble the other in his mien and habit ;
I left them in the outskirts of the grove ;
Let us go forth, my friends, and bring them in :
You to that quarter, I to this.—Away !

[*Exeunt severally.*]

Enter Lord Hildebrand and Saint Valori.

S A I N T V A L O R I.

Bear up, Lord Hildebrand ! there's hope in view.
See'st thou yon turrets, that o'er top the wood ?
There we may shelter from the storm, and men
More merciless than rocks and winds, that wreck'd
Our strong-ribb'd galley in the foaming surge.

H I L D E B R A N D.

I see the towers you point at, but I fear
My limbs will fail their burden ere we reach them.
Let me lie down beneath these oaks, and die.

S A I N T V A L O R I.

If thus you shake with the soul's ague, fear,
Back to the sea, and seek the death you fled from ;
Make not a coward's grave on English ground ;
Your life is stak'd, your gauntlet is exchang'd,
Each drop of blood about you is in pledge
To meet the champion of Saint Valori,
A lady's champion, in King Henry's lists :
There fight ; or, if you needs must die, die there ;
Fall, as a Norman knight shou'd fall, in arms.

B 2

H I L D E B R A N D.

4 THE CARMELITE:

HILDEBRAND.

Father, your words accord not with your weeds.

SAINT VALORI.

Our ancestors were holy men, and they
Ordain'd the combat, as the test of truth ;
Let them who made the law defend the law,
Our part is to obey it.—Hark ! who comes ?
The islanders will be upon us.—Stand !

Enter Fitz-Allan and Raymond.

FITZ-ALLAN.

What ho ! Montgomeri !—the men are found.

SAINT VALORI.

Inhuman Englishmen ! Will you destroy
Your brethren ? We are Normans.—

Enter Montgomeri.

MONTGOMERI.

Ye are men,

Let that suffice ; we are no savages.

SAINT VALORI.

’Tis the brave youth who sav’d us.

MONTGOMERI.

Heav’n hath sav’d you,
To Heav’n give thanks, O men redeem’d from
death :

All else have perish’d !—’Tis a barbarous coast.

SAINT VALORI.

How is your island named ?

MONTGOMERI.

The Isle of Wight.

SAINT VALORI.

Alas ! that isle so fair should prove so fatal !—

And

And you our benefactor, by what name
Shall we record you in our prayers?

MONTGOMERI.

I am call'd

Montgomeri.

SAINT VALORI.

'Twill be our grateful office,
Generous Montgomeri, to make suit to Heaven
To bless, reward, and from distress like ours
Protect you ever.

MONTGOMERI.

Now declare thyself,
And this thy mournful friend, whom grief makes
dumb,
Say who he is.

HILDEBRAND.

A wretch without a name.

SAINT VALORI.

A gentleman of Normandy he is,
One who has seen good days.—'Tis now no time
To tell you further: he has wounds about him,
And bruises dealt him on the craggy beach,
That cry for charity.—Whose is that castle?

MONTGOMERI.

A lady's, whom we serve, of Norman birth.

SAINT VALORI.

Then lead us to her gates, for we are Normans;
Poor helpless men, fainting with want of food
And over-watching: tedious nights and days
We struggled with the storm: the greedy deep
Has swallow'd up our ship, our friends, our all,
And left us to your mercy. Sure your lady,

THE CARMELITE:

Who owns so fair a mansion, owns withal
A heart to give us welcome.—You are silent.

F I T Z - A L L A N .

To save you, and supply your pressing wants
With food and raiment, and what else you need,
We promise, nothing doubting: more than this
Stands not within our privilege—no stranger
Enters her castle.

S A I N T V A L O R I .

Wherefore this exclusion?

What can she fear from us?

F I T Z - A L L A N .

Ask not a reason;
We question not her orders, but obey them.

S A I N T V A L O R I .

Then lay us down before her castle-gates,
And let us die: inhospitable gates!
Your roofs shall echo with our famish'd shrieks.—
A Norman she! impossible: our wolves
Have hearts more pityful.

M O N T G O M E R I .

Your saints in bliss,
Your calendar of martyrs does not own
A soul more pure, a virtue more sublime:
Her very name will strike defamers dumb.

S A I N T V A L O R I .

Speak it.

M O N T G O M E R I .

Saint Valori.

S A I N T V A L O R I .

Uphold me, Heaven!

The ways of Providence are full of wonder,

And

A T R A G E D Y. 7

And all its works are mercy.—How now, Sir !
Will you betray yourself? what shakes you thus ?

HILDEBRAND.

I sicken at the heart: let me go hence,
And make myself a grave.

SAIN T VALORI.

Be patient: stay !—

And hath your lady here consum'd her youth
In pensive solitude? Twenty long years,
And still a widow !

MONTGOMERI.

Still a mournful widow.

SAIN T VALORI.

Hath she such sorrows of her own, and yet
No heart to pity ours? It cannot be:
I'll not believe but she will take us in,
And comfort her poor countrymen.

MONTGOMERI.

Forbid it, Heav'n,
That misery thus should plead, and no friend found
To speak in its behalf!—I'll move her for you.

SAIN T VALORI.

The Mother of our Lord reward you for it!
'Twill be a Christian deed.

FITZ-ALLAN.

Montgomeri, turn;
Have you your senses? the attempt is madness.

RAYMOND.

Where is the man, native or foreigner,
(Inmates excepted) ever pass'd her doors?—
Who dares to ask it?

MONTGOMERI.

I; Montgomeri.

B 4

RAYMOND.

8 THE CARMELITE:

RAYMOND.

So dare not I.

FITZ-ALLAN.

Nor I: success attend you!

But share the attempt I dare not—so farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

MONTGOMERI.

Farewell to both!—Strangers, be not dismay'd,
I'll soon return; the place will be your safeguard.

[*Exit Montgomeri.*]

SAIN T VALORI.

Lord Hildebrand, stand not aghast: you see
The youth is confident: look up and live!

HILDEBRAND.

By my soul's penitence, I'd rather die
Unpitied, starv'd, and to her castle dogs
Bequeath my untomb'd carcase, than receive
Life from her hands; the widow of Saint Valori!
That brave heroic Champion of the Cross,
Whom, from the holy wars returning home,
Within the rugged Pyrenæan pass—

SAIN T VALORI.

No more of that: I have your full confession;
You slew Saint Valori, and now his widow
Provokes you by her champion to defend
The rights you seiz'd, the title you inherit,
And hold by bloody charter.—What's your fear?
Saint Valori's dead; he cannot rise again,
And beard you in the lists.

HILDEBRAND.

Oh, that he cou'd!

So I were not a murderer.

SAIN T

A TRAGEDY.

9

SAIN T VALORI.

Grant you flew him,
Twenty long years have staunch'd the bleeding
wound
Of him you flew, and laid his angry ghost.
Have you not rear'd his stately tomb, endow'd
The abbey of Saint Valori, and purchas'd
Perpetual masses to reclaim his soul
From purgatory's bondage? Have you faith
In absolution's power, and do you doubt
If yet atonement's made?

HILDEBRAND.

I do perceive

The hand of Heav'n hangs o'er me and my house:
Why am I childless else? seven sons swept off
To their untimely graves; their wretched mother
By her own hand in raging phrenzy died;
And last behold me here, forlorn, abandon'd,
At life's last hour, before her surly gate,
Deaf to my hungry cries: and shall we rank
Such judgments in the casual course of things?
To me 'tis palpable that heav'nly justice
Puts nature by, and to the swelling sum
Of my uncancell'd crimes adds all the lives
Of them who funk this morning.

SAIN T VALORI.

What know'st thou,
Blind or obdurate man? Shall we despise,
On whom the light of this deliverance shines?
No, let us boldly follow: there's a voice
Augurs within me wond'rous things, and new,
Now on the moment's point: for of a certain

I know

I know this lady shall set wide her gates
 To give us joyful welcome: sable weeds
 Shall turn to bridal robes, and joy shall ring
 Thro' all her festive mansion, where of late
 Deep groans and doleful lamentations howl'd.
 Therefore no more; from my prophetic lips
 Receive Heaven's mandate—and behold 'tis here!

Enter Montgomeri.

MONTGOMERI.

Health to your hopes, that were but now so sick!
 Ye sons of sadness, cast off your despair;
 Heav'n has vouchsaf'd deliverance, and sends
 Its angel messenger in person to you.

SAIN T VALORI.

Then let me kneel, and hail the heav'nly vision!

[Kneels.

Enter the Lady of Saint Valori.

To Him, to Him alone, who by the hand
 Leads his unseeing creatures thro' the vale
 Of sorrow, to the day-spring of their hope,
 Be praise and adoration!—A poor Monk, *(rising)*
 Who has trod many a weary league, as far
 As there was Christian ground to carry him,
 Asks for himself, and for this mournful man,
 Newly escap'd from shipwreck, food and rest,
 Warmth, and the shelter of your peaceful roof.

MATILDA.

Are ye of Normandy?

SAIN T VALORI.

We are of Normandy:
 But were we not your countrymen, distress

Like

A T R A G E D Y. II

Like ours wou'd make us so. Two of your servants
Spoke harshly, and had thrust us from your gates
But for this charitable youth.

MATILDA.

Alas !

I am a helpless solitary woman,
A widow, who have lost—O God ! O God !
'Twill turn my brain to speak of what I've lost :
It is amongst the lightest of my griefs
That I have lost myself.

SAIN T VALORI.

Thyself !

MATILDA.

My senses :

At best they are but half my own, sometimes
I am bereft of all. Therefore I lead
On this lone coast a melancholy life,
And shut my gate, but not my charity,
Against the stranger.

SAIN T VALORI.

Oh, support me, Heaven !

'Tis she, 'tis she ! that woe-tun'd voice is her's ;
Those eyes, that cast their pale and waining fires
With such a melting languor thro' my soul,
Those eyes are her's and sorrow's.—Heart, be still !
She speaks again.

MATILDA.

You shall have food and cloathing ;
I'll bring you medicines for your bruised wounds.
What else you need declare.

SAIN T VALORI.

If I speak now,
She cannot bear it; it will turn her brain.

What

THE CARMELITE:

What shall I say?—We are your countrymen—
Oh my full heart! Oh anguish to dissemble!

MATILDA.

Nay, if you weep—

SAINT VALORI.

Let us but touch your altar:
We are the sole sad relicks of the wreck.
Let us but kneel and offer up one prayer
For our soul's peace, then turn us forth to die.

MATILDA.

Mercy forbid it!—Oh, approach and enter:
If you can weep, we will converse whole days,
And speak no other language; we will sit,
Like fountain statues, face to face oppos'd,
And each to other tell our griefs in tears,
Yet neither utter word.—Pray you, pass on;
I had not been thus strict, but that I hear
Lord Hildebrand is on the seas: I hope
You are not of his friends.

HILDEBRAND.

Death to my heart!
O father Carmelite, I must have leave—

SAINT VALORI.

On your salvation, peace!

MATILDA.

What wou'd he say?

SAINT VALORI.

His brain begins to turn: take him away.
I pray you, lead him hence.

[Montgomeri *leads off* Hildebrand.

MATILDA.

Alas! I pity him.

Why

Why dost thou stay behind?—Whence that emotion?

What wou'dst thou more?

SAINT VALORI.

I wou'd invoke a blessing,

But that each sainted spirit in the skies
Will be thy better advocate.

MATILDA.

Remember,

When you converse with Heav'n, there is a wretch
Who will be glad of any good man's prayers.—
Farewell.

SAINT VALORI.

Oh, tell me, have you then endur'd
Twenty long years of mournful widowhood?

MATILDA.

They say 'tis twenty years ago he died;
I cannot speak of time: it may be so;
Yet I shou'd think 'twas yesterday.

SAINT VALORI.

I saw you—

MATILDA.

You saw me! When?

SAINT VALORI.

When you did wed your Lord.—
The paragon of all this world you was.
Grief has gone o'er you like a wintry cloud.—
You've heard this voice before.

MATILDA.

I think I have:

It gives a painful sense of former days:
I've heard such voices in my dreams; sometimes
Convers'd with them all night; but then they told me

My

14 THE CARMELITE:

My senses wander'd.—Pray you, do not harm me ;
Leave me, good Monk ; indeed I know you not.

SAINT VALORI.

I wore no monkish cowl in that gay hour
When you wore bridal white. On Pagan ground,
Beneath the banner of the Christian Cross,
Faithful I fought ; I was God's soldier then,
Tho' now his peaceful servant.

MATILDA.

You have fought
Under the Christian Cross !—You shake my brain.

SAINT VALORI.

Peace to your thoughts ! I will no farther move you :
Shall I not lead you hence ?

MATILDA.

Stand off ; stand off !
The murderer of Saint Valori is abroad ;
The bloody Hildebrand is on the seas.—
Rise, rise, ye waves ! blow from all points, ye winds,
And whelm th' accursed plank that wafts him over
In fathomless perdition !—Let him sink,
He and his hateful crew ! let none escape,
Not one ; or if one, let him only breathe
To tell his tale, and die !—Away ! begone !
You've made me mad.

SAINT VALORI.

I was Saint Valori's friend :
He never yet bled with the battle's wound,
But I shed drop for drop : when o'er the sands
Of sultry Palestine with panting heart
He march'd, my panting heart with his kept time,
And number'd throb for throb.

MATILDA.

MATILDA.

Where are my people?

What ho! Montgomeri! Lead, lead me hence.

Enter Montgomeri *hastily, with Gyfford.*

Give me thine arm! support me! Oh, 'tis well,
 To horse, to horse!—I have a champion now,
 Whose hand, heart, soul are mine, and mine are his;
 One who has valour to assert my cause,
 And worth to wear the honours he defends.

MONTGOMERI.

What hast thou done, old man?

GYFFORD.

Stay not to question;

Look to the lady: leave the Monk with me.

MATILDA.

Come, let us hence; I do not live without thee.

[Exit with Montgomeri.]

SAINT VALORI.

Amazement!—Speak, what kindred, what affection,
 What passion binds her to that youth?—Resolve me,
 Who and what is he?

GYFFORD.

You are curious, father.

Who he may be I know not; what he was
 I well remember.

SAINT VALORI.

What was he?

GYFFORD.

Her page;

A menial thing, no better than myself.

SAINT VALORI.

Heavens! can it be? Will she so far descend

16 THE CARMELITE:

From her great name, to wanton with her page?
Saw you the look she gave him?

GYFFORD.

I did see it.

SAIN T VALORI.

It seem'd as tho' his eyes had magic in them,
That charm'd away her madness.—Hah! you sigh:
What means that pensive movement of your head?
Answer!

GYFFORD.

Good father, question me no more.
Fortune can level all things in this world,
Pull down the mighty and exalt the mean:
But you and I methinks have outliv'd wonders.—
Now to the castle! Shut both ears and eyes:
Hear without noting; see, but not observe

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

An Apartment in Matilda's Castle.

Enter Saint Valori and Gyfford.

GYFFORD.

WITH awful wonder I survey and hear you,
Whilst thro' the veil of that dis guiseful habit,
Thro' all the changes time and toil have wrought
In that once-noble visage, I scarce trace
The lineaments of my most honour'd Lord.

SAIN T VALORI.

Awake from this surprize, and hear me, Gyfford.
I am no spectre, but thy living master :
Wounded and breathless on the ground I lay,
Welt'ring in blood : th' assassins fled and left me ;
There I had soon expir'd, but that a company
Of merchants journeying from Venice found me,
And charitably staunch'd my bleeding wounds.
To their own homes they bore me : heal'd, restor'd,
In a Venetian galley I embark'd,
And sail'd for Genoa ; but ere we reach'd
Our destin'd port, a Saracen assaill'd
And master'd our weak crew.—To tell the tale

C

Of

18 THE CARMELITE:

Of my captivity, escape, return,
Would ask more leisure, and a mind at ease.

GYFFORD.

But why does brave Saint Valori appear
A bearded Carmelite?

SAIN T VALORI.

This holy habit

Thro' a long course of dangerous pilgrimage
Has been my saving passport: thus attir'd
I reach'd my native castle, found it larded
By the usurper Hildebrand; with zeal—
I burn'd to call my faithful people round me,
And throw off my disguise; this I had done,
But strait arriv'd a herald from King Henry
To warn him to the lists against the champion
Of my supposed widow: the pale coward
Shrunk, yet obey'd the summons. The thought
struck me

To join his train, and in my sovereign's presence
At the last trumpet's signal to come forth
Before the King, the lords, and armed knights,
And strike confusion to the caitiff's soul.—
The rest needs no relation.

GYFFORD.

'Tis resolv'd
To-morrow for Southampton we depart;
There Henry keeps his court.

SAIN T VALORI.

Why then, to-morrow
Truth and the morning-sun shall rise together,
And this black night of doubt shall be dispell'd:
Till then lock fast my secret in thy heart,
And know me for none other than I seem.

Lo,

Lo, where they come! Yet, yet I will be patient;
 Time will bring all things forth.—Gyfford, withdraw.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Matilda and Montgomeri.

MATILDA.

I think he said he was my husband's friend;
 If so I've been too harsh: reason forsook me,
 For he did speak of things that rent my heart:
 But let that pass.—Dost thou observe, Montgomeri?

MONTGOMERI.

With fix'd attention and devoted heart
 I hear, and note your pleasure.

MATILDA.

I am calm,
 Thou seest I am, and not about to speak,
 As sometimes, when my thoughts obey no order:
 Therefore I pray thee mark.—Thou must have
 noted

With what a tenderness I've train'd thee up
 From helpless infancy to blooming manhood:
 Hast thou not noted this?

MONTGOMERI.

I were most vile
 Did I forget it.

MATILDA.

I am sure thou dost not;
 For from the moment of thy birth till now
 I've nurs'd thy opening virtues, mark'd their growth;
 And gloried in the fruit of my adoption:
 I've register'd each movement of thy soul,
 And find it tun'd to honour's loftiest pitch,

20 THE CARMELITE:

To soft affection modell'd, and to love,
The harmony of nature: my best hopes
Are satisfied, and thou art all I pray'd for.

MONTGOMERI.

What thou hast made me that I truly am,
And will be ever: hands, head, heart are your's.

MATILDA.

The day is coming on, the wish'd-for day
(After a night of twice ten tedious years)
At length is coming on: justice is granted;
I go to Henry's court; Lord Hildebrand
Is summon'd to the lists: and where's the man
To avenge the widow's cause?

MONTGOMERI.

Where is the man!

And can you want a champion?—Have I liv'd
The creature of your care, the orphan child
Of your adopting charity, the thing
Your plastic bounty fashion'd from the dust
Of abject misery; and does my heart
Utter one drop of blood that is not your's,
One artery that does not beat for you?

MATILDA.

Know, then, I have a champion, noble, brave,
Heir of the great Saint Valori, my son.

MONTGOMERI.

What do I hear? thy son!—Where has he liv'd,
That I have never seen him? never known
There was a living hero of the name?
Oh, tell me where he is, that I may fly
To do him faithful service, on my knee
Brace on his glittering armour, bear his shield,

The

The glorious badge of his nobility,
 And shout with triumph when his conqu'ring sword
 Cleaves the assassin's crest.—Oh send me hence,
 To hail his victory, or share his fall !

M A T I L D A.

Thou art my son.

M O N T G O M E R I.

Merciful God ! thy son !

M A T I L D A.

Thou art my son ; for thee alone I've liv'd,
 For thee I have surviv'd a murder'd husband ;
 For thee—but it would break thy filial heart
 To hear what I have suffer'd ; madness seiz'd me,
 And many a time (sweet Jesus intercede,
 For I was not myself !) yes, many a time
 In my soul's anguish, with my desperate hand
 Rais'd for the stroke of death, a thought, a glance
 Of thee, my child, has smote my shatter'd brain,
 And stopt th' impending blow.

M O N T G O M E R I.

Oh, spare thyself,
 Spare me the dread description !

M A T I L D A.

Thou hast been
 Thy mother's guardian angel : furious once,
 In the mind's fever, to Glendarlock's roof
 Mad'ning I rush'd ; there, from the giddy edge
 Of the projecting battlements, below,
 Measuring the fearful leap, I cast my eye :
 Thy cherub form arrested it ; my child
 Upon the pavement underneath my feet
 Sported with infant playfulness ; my blood

C 3

Drove

22 THE CARMELITE:

Drove back upon my heart ; suspended, pois'd,
High hung in air, with outstretch'd arms I stood,
Pondering the dreadful deed ; thy fate prevail'd,
Nature flew up, and push'd me from the brink—
I shrunk, recoil'd, and started into reason.

MONTGOMERI.

Oh terrible to thought ! Oh pictur'd horror !
It pierces to my brain ; there's madness in it.

MATILDA.

Yes, sorrow had o'erturn'd thy mother's brain :
I have been mad, my son ; and oftentimes
I find, alas ! all is not yet compos'd,
Sound, and at peace : it takes a world of time
To heal the wounds of reason ; even now,
When I would fain relate my life's sad story,
I cannot range my scatter'd thoughts in order
To tell it as I shou'd.—I pray thee pardon me ;
I'll do my best to recollect myself,
If thou'l be patient.

MONTGOMERI.

Patient ! Oh, thou sufferer !

Oh, thou maternal softness ! hear thy son,
Thus kneeling, bathing with his tears thy feet,
Swear to cast off each fond alluring thought,
The world, its honours, pleasures, and ambition ;
Here in this solitude to live with thee,
To thee alone devoted !

MATILDA.

No, my son :

Tho' in this solitude I have conceal'd thee,
Ev'n from thyself conceal'd thee, to evade
A fell usurper's search, and stemm'd the tide
Of nature, gushing to a mother's heart ;

Still

Still I have done it in the sacred hope
Of some auspicious hour, when I might shew thee
Bright as thy father's fame.

MONTGOMERI.

I own the cause,
And know how watchfully this hungry vulture
Has hover'd o'er thee on his felon wings.
Now I can solve this solitude around us,
Why thou hast built thine airey in this cragg,
And with a mother's care conceal'd thy young.

MATILDA.

Another day, and then—meanwhile be secret ;
Discovery now wou'd but disturb the house
From its sobriety, and mar the time
Of awful preparation.—Pass to-morrow !—
(Oh, all ye saints and angels, make it happy !)
Then, if thou com'st a living conqueror home,
This roof, that still has echoed to my groans,
Shall ring with triumphs to Saint Valori's name :
But if—

MONTGOMERI.

Avert the sad, ill-omen'd word !
Thou shalt not name it : my great father's spirit
Swells in my bosom.—When my falchion gleams,
When the red Cross darts terror from my shield,
The coward's heart shall quail, and Heaven's own
arm,
Ere mine can strike, shall lay the murderer low.

MATILDA.

Thy father stirs within thee : hark ! methinks
I hear the shrieks of his unburied ghost,
Screaming for vengeance.—Oh, support, defend me !
See where he gleams, he bursts upon my sight !

'Tis he ! 'tis he ! I clasp him to my heart ;
My hero ! my Saint Valori ! my husband !

[Embraces him.]

Enter Gyfford *unseen* ; starts.

GYFFORD.

Husband ! oh fatal word ! undone for ever !

MATILDA.

I will array thee in a sacred suit,
The very armour my Saint Valori wore,
When in the single combat he unhors'd
And slew the Lord Fitz-Osborn. On that helm
High-plum'd victory again shall stand,
And clap her wings exulting ; from that shield
Vengeance with gorgon terrors shall look forth,
Awfully frowning.—Hah ! what man art thou ?

[Discovering Gyfford.]

Gyfford, what would'st thou ? wherefore this intrusion ?

GYFFORD.

A noble messenger from Henry's court
Is landed on the isle.

MATILDA.

From the King, say'st thou ?

GYFFORD.

A runner of his train, whose utmost speed
Scarce distanc'd him an hour, is now arriv'd,
And gives this warning.

MATILDA.

Did you not enquire
His master's name and title ?

GYFFORD.

Lord De Courci.

MATILDA.

A generous and right noble lord he is :

Our

Our Normandy boasts not a worthier baron,
Nor one affianc'd to our house more kindly :
Prepare to give him welcome.—Follow me.

[Exit with Montgomeri.

G Y F F O R D.

Yes, to destruction, for that way thou lead'st.
Husband !—her husband ! her Saint Valori !
It cannot be.—Without the church's rites
Wed him she could not ; to conceal those rites,
And wed by stealth, is here impossible.
What must I think ?—That he is yet her husband
In meditation only, not in form.
Embracing too !—Oh mortal stab to honour !
O shame, shame, shame ! that I shou'd live to see it.

Enter Saint Valori *hastily.*

S A I N T V A L O R I.

What hast thou seen ? my mind is on the rack ;
Thou'st been in conference with thy lady ; speak !—
If thou hast aught discover'd that affects
My honour, tell it.

G Y F F O R D.

Hard task you enjoin ;
Wou'd rather I were in my grave, than living
To utter what I've seen.

S A I N T V A L O R I.

Nay, no evasion.

G Y F F O R D.

For the world's worth I would not with my knowledge
Add or diminish of the truth one tittle.

S A I N T V A L O R I.

Gyfford, as thou shalt render up the truth
To the great Judge of hearts, say what thou know'st
Of my unhappy wife ; nor more nor less,
Give me the proof unvarnish'd.

G Y F F O R D.

GYFFORD.

I surpriz'd

Her and Montgomeri heart to heart embracing—

SAINT VALORI.

Death! Heart to heart embracing!—Woman,
woman!

GYFFORD.

Fond and entranc'd within his arms she lay;
Then with uplifted rapturous eyes exclaim'd,
" My hero! my Saint Valori! my husband!"

SAINT VALORI.

Husband! reflect.—Art sure she call'd him husband?

GYFFORD.

If there be faith in man, I've spoke the truth.

SAINT VALORI.

Why then the truth is out, and all is past:

I have no more to ask.

GYFFORD.

Hear me with favour;

I'll not abuse the licence of old age
And faithful service with too many words.

SAINT VALORI.

What canst thou tell me?—I have one within
That is my monitor: not unprepar'd
I meet this fatal stroke, nor with revilings
Or impious curses (be my witness, Gyfford!)
Do I profane Heav'n's ear, tho' hard and painful
This bitter visitation of its wrath.

GYFFORD.

Tho' to the sure conviction of my senses
I saw and heard what I have now reported,
Yet, circumstances weigh'd, I must believe
As yet she is not wedded.

SAINT

A TRAGEDY.

27

SAIN T VALORI.

Hah ! not wedded ?

Perish the man who dares to breathe a doubt
Of her unspotted chastity : not wedded !
Yet heart to heart embracing ! dreadful thought !—
Death in his direst shape approach me rather
Than that dishonest doubt !

GYFFORD.

Wou'd I had died

Ere I had seen this day !

SAIN T VALORI.

Wretch that I am,

Why was I snatch'd from slaughter ? why deliver'd
From barbarous infidels ? why, when o'erwhelm'd
And sinking in th' oblivious deep, preserv'd,
Wash'd like a floating fragment to the shore,
Sav'd, nourish'd, ransom'd by the very hand
That cuts my heart asunder ; set in view
Of all my soul held dear ; and now, ev'n now,
As I reach forth my hand to seize the goal,
The resting-place and haven of my hope,
Dash'd in a moment back, and lost for ever ?

GYFFORD.

Such is the will of Heaven ! For me, thus old, —
And blighted with misfortune, I've no strength,
No root to bear against this second storm ;
There, whete I fall, I'll make myself a grave.

SAIN T VALORI.

No more of this : you've heard my last complaint ;
For I must soon put off these monkish weeds,
And what a consecrated knight should do,
Fitting the Cross he wears, that must be done.—

How stands your preparation for to-morrow?
Will she depart?

GYFFORD.

I think she will; for now
The Lord De Courci, from King Henry sent,
Bears courtly salutation to your Lady,
With formal summons to her challenger.

SAIN T VALORI.

If it be that De Courci who was once
My youth's companion, and my bosom friend,
A more accomplished knight ne'er carried arms:
His coming is most timely.—Tell me, Gyfford,
Rememberest thou the armour which I wore
When in the lists I combated Fitz-Osborn?—
I gave it to my wife.

GYFFORD.

I well remember.

SAIN T VALORI.

And hath she kept it, think'st thou?

GYFFORD.

She hath kept it.

SAIN T VALORI.

'Tis well; for that's the suit, the very suit,
Which I must wear to-morrow.

GYFFORD.

Ah, my Lord!

She hath bestow'd that armour on her champion;
And young Montgomeri with to-morrow's dawn
Starts, like another Phaeton, array'd
In substituted splendor: on his arm
He bears the shield of great Saint Valori,
A golden branch of palm, with this device,

“Another,

“Another, and the same!”—’Twill be a pageant
Glittering as vanity and love can make it.

SAINT VALORI.

Mournful as death.—My armour will she take?
My shield, my banners, to array her champion?
Let them beware how they divide the spoil
Before the lion’s kill’d.—Oh, fall of virtue!
Oh, all ye matron powers of modesty!
How time’s revolving wheel wears down the edge
Of sharp affliction! Widows sable weeds
Soon turn to grey; drop a few tears upon them,
And dusky grey is blanch’d to bridal white;
Then comes the sun, shines thro’ the drizzling
show’r,
And the gay rainbow glows in all its colours.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT

A C T III.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Castle.

Enter Lord Hildebrand *and* Saint Valori.

HILDEBRAND.

AH, father Carmelite ! where hast thou been ?
Was it well done to leave thy wretched friend
To be devour'd by heart-consuming anguish ?

SAIN T VALORI.

I left you to repose.

HILDEBRAND.

I know it not :

Sleep is my horror ; then the furies rise ;
Then pale Saint Valori appears before me :
Trembling I wake, cold damps bedew my limbs,
And my couch floats with tears.—Is this repose ?

SAIN T VALORI.

No ; yet it moves my wonder why your conscience,
Mute for so many years, shou'd on the sudden
Break into voice, and cry so loud against you.—
I found you lull'd in a luxurious calm,
Feasting upon the spoils of him you stabb'd ;

Your

Your castle flow'd with revelry and wine,
And you the loudest of the sons of riot:
Where was your conscience then?

HILDEBRAND.

With you it came;

You are the father of my soul's repentance:
Your fascinating eye pervades my breast;
Conscious, abash'd, uncover'd to the heart,
I stand before you—to your ear confide
Things unreveal'd to man. Now, as I see you,
Tho' in religion's peaceful garment cloath'd,
Saint Valori methinks appears before me,
Dreadful in arms, and braves me to the lists.

SAIN T VALORI.

Take food and rest, recruit your body's strength,
And you'll forget these fears.

HILDEBRAND.

I'll die with famine

Before I'll eat the charitable bread
Of her I made a widow; and for sleep,
I tell thee once again sleep is my horror.
Methought but now by shipwreck I was plung'd
Into the foaming ocean; on the shore
Your figure stood with beck'ning hand outstretch'd
To snatch me from the waves; chear'd with the sight,
Thro' the white surf I struggled; with strong arm
You rais'd me from the gulph; joyful I ran
T' embrace my kind preserver—when at once
Off fell your habit, bright in arms you stood,
And with a voice of thunder cried aloud,
"Villain, avaunt! I am Saint Valori!"—
Then push'd me from the cliff: down, down I fell,
Fathoms on fathoms deep, and sunk for ever!

SAIN T

SAINT VALORI.

This was your dream.

HILDEBRAND.

Now hear my waking terrors.—

Rous'd by this dream I started ; to the wall
 Furious I rush'd, to dash my desperate brains :
 Burst with the force, a secret door flew open,
 Where full in view a lighted altar blaz'd
 With holy tapers bright ; around it hung
 The funeral trophies of Saint Valori ;
 Red gleam'd the banner of the bloody Cross,
 And on a tablet underneath was written,
 "Pray for the peace of his departed soul!"
 Upon my knees I dropt, and would have pray'd,
 When soon, behold ! the Lady Widow enter'd,
 Led by the generous youth who sav'd our lives :
 I rose, made low obeisance, and retir'd.

SAINT VALORI.

You left them there.—Did all this pass in silence ?

HILDEBRAND.

All ; not a word was spoken.

SAINT VALORI.

Did you note

Her look, her action ?—How did she dismiss you ?
 Abruptly, eagerly ?

HILDEBRAND.

With matron grace,

Her hand thus gently waving, she dismiss'd me ;
 The other hand most lovingly was lock'd
 In his on whom she lean'd.

SAINT VALORI.

No more of this.

Hark !

Hark ! you are summon'd—rouse from this despair;
Shake off your lethargy ! [Trumpet.]

HILDEBRAND.

What trumpet's that ?

SAINT VALORI.

To you, or to your challenger, the last ;
Death sounds the knell, and justice seals the doom.

HILDEBRAND.

My soul sinks down abash'd : I cannot fight ;
What wou'd you more ? I have confess the murder.

SAINT VALORI.

You have confess you know not what : retire !
Go to your chamber ; I will quickly follow,
And bring you comfort.—Nay, make no reply.
The time is labouring, wond'rous things and new
Press to the birth ; prepare yourself to meet them.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

Enter Matilda and her Domestics, De Courci and his Train.

MATILDA.

My noble Lord, thrice welcome ! you are come
To glad the mourner's heart, and with your presence
Make her poor cottage rich.

DE COURCI.

Most noble Lady,

Henry of Normandy, the kingly heir
Of England's mighty conqueror, of his grace
And princely courtesy, by me his servant,
As a most loving father, kindly greets you :
Which salutation past, I am to move you
Upon the matter of your suit afresh,

Its weight and circumstance ; how many years
 It hath been let to sleep ; what forfeiture
 And high default you stand in, shou'd it fail :
 Conjuring you, as fits a Christian king,
 By the lov'd memory of your honour'd Lord
 Who now hath tenanted the silent grave
 These twenty years and more, not to proceed
 In this high matter on surmise, or charge
 Of doubtful circumstance ; the crime alledg'd
 Being so heinous, the appeal so bloody,
 And he whom you attaint so brave and noble.

MATILDA.

I know, my Lord, in property the law
 Can plead prescription and the time's delay ;
 But justice, in an inquisition made for blood,
 With retrospective eye thro' ages past
 Moves her own pace, nor hears the law's demur.—
 Why I have let this murder sleep thus long,
 Necessity, and not my will, must answer.
 The conqueror William, and his furious son,
 With iron hand upheld th' oppressor's power,
 And stopt their ears against the widow's cries.
 In painful silence brooding o'er my grief,
 On this lone rock, upon the ocean's brink,
 Year after year I languish'd, in my dreams
 Conversing oft with shadowy shapes and horrors,
 That scar'd me into madness.—Oh, my Lord !
 Bear with my weakness : pray regard me not ;
 I have a remedy at hand—my tears. [weeps.]

DE COURCI.

Sad relict of the bravest, best of men,
 Tell not thy griefs to me, nor let my words
 (Which by commission, not of choice, I speak)

Shake

Shake thy firm purpose ; for on England's throne
No tyrant sits, deaf to the widow's cause,
But Heav'n's vicegerent, merciful and just.
If stedfast thou art fix'd in thy appeal,
Stedfast in justice is thy sovereign too.
Bring forth thy knight appellant, for the lists
Expect him, and may Heav'n defend the right !

MATILDA.

Thanks to thy royal sender ! on my knee
I offer prayers to Heaven for length of days,
And blessings shower'd on his anointed head.—
Now, gallant Lord, you shall behold my champion,
My shepherd boy, who, like the son of Jesse,
Unskill'd in arms, must combat this Philistine.—
Montgomeri, come forth !

Enter Montgomeri.

DE COURCI.

Is this your knight ?

MATILDA.

This is my knight. I trust not in the strength
Of mortal man ; Heav'n will uphold my cause,
And to a murderer's heart will guide the blow,
Tho' from an infant's hand.

DE COURCI.

Of what degree

Must I report him ? In the royal lists,
Against so proud a name as Hildebrand,
The warlike forms of knighthood will demand
That noble shall to noble be oppos'd.

MATILDA.

Not unprepar'd I shall attend the lists,

D 2

And

And at my sovereign's feet prefer the proofs
Which honour's forms demand.

DE COURCI.

You know the peril,
If you fall short.

MATILDA.

I take it on my head.

DE COURCI.

Where have you serv'd? What battles have you
seen?

MONTGOMERI.

Few and unfortunate have been the fields
Where I have fought.—I serv'd a sinking cause;
Robert of Normandy was my liege Lord,
For I am Norman born.

DE COURCI.

Have you been train'd
In tournaments?

MONTGOMERI.

I never broke a lance,
Nor shall I, as I hope, but in his heart
Who stabb'd Saint Valori.

DE COURCI.

Noble Lady,
I wou'd impart something of nearest import
To your more private ear.

MATILDA.

Let all withdraw: [*they withdraw.*
Leave us.—And now, my Lord and honour'd guest,
Impart your noble thoughts; for sure I am
None others can be native of a soul,
Where courtesy and valour are enshrin'd,

As

As in a holy altar, under guard
Of consecrated keepers—therefore speak;

DE COURCI.

Let infamy fix on me, when I wrong
A confidence so generous!—Heav'n bestow'd
One friend, the pride and blessing of my life;
Heav'n, when you lost a husband, from me also
Took that one friend away, and in his grave
Buried my heart beside him.

MATILDA.

Yes, my Lord,

We both have cause to mourn him: I remember
The day he parted for the Holy Wars,
His manly bosom struggling to repress
Its bursting passion, in those racking moments,
When stern religion rent him from my arms,
Then, even then, in his capacious soul
Friendship had part—you shar'd it with Matilda.
Need I proceed? ah, no! for you was present,
You took him from me, on your neck he fell;—
I parted, sunk, and never saw him more.

DE COURCI.

'Twas in those parting moments he committed
A sacred charge, the very test of friendship,
Your soft unsheltered beauty, to my care.
I serv'd, consol'd you, lov'd you as a brother;
But soon Saint Valori call'd me from my charge,
For war and sickness had consum'd our host,
And Palestine was drench'd with Christian blood.—
We fought, we conquer'd, and from Pagan hands
Rescu'd the captive Cross: and now command
My zealous heart, you are it's mistress still.

D 3

MATILDA.

MATILDA.

There needs not this, my Lord ; for I can read
 Your zeal without a preface : freely then,
 As a friend shou'd, and plainly speak your thoughts.

DE COURCI.

When rumour of this combat reach'd my ears,
 Without delay I sent a trusty page,
 Offering myself as your devoted knight :
 He brought for answer, that you had a champion,
 You thank'd me for my offer ;—cold repulse
 Temper'd in courteous phrase ! still I submitted
 In silence, as became me, to your pleasure,
 Musing who this might be—

MATILDA.

And now you find him
 A stripling youth unknown, in arms a novice,
 And you condemn my choice ; these are your thoughts.

DE COURCI.

I do confess it.—Oh, reflect in time !
 Think not because nature hath cast a form
 In fair proportion, strung his youthful joints
 With nerves that bear him bounding to the chace,
 Or hurl the wrestler in the shouting ring,
 That you have train'd a champion to encounter
 A combatant so practis'd in the lifts,
 So valorous in fight as Hildebrand.

MATILDA.

What I have done, I've done : your zeal, my Lord,
 May start new terrors for my hero's danger,
 Shake me with new alarms ; but change it cannot.

DE COURCI.

Turn not away, but still with patience hear me.
 Think what you are, great in yourself, yet greater

As

As brave Saint Valori's widow : Oh preserve
That name untainted ; hear what honour counsels ;
Truth makes me bold, your danger is my warrant.

MATILDA.

You was my husband's friend ; I own your plea.
Lo ! I am turn'd to hear : proceed.

DE COURCI.

I was his friend,

I am your's also ; and as such I warn you
Against a deed so fatal, that the steel
Of Hildebrand gave not a stab more mortal
To life than this to fame.

MATILDA.

My Lord, my Lord !

You rise too fast upon me, and advance
Too strongly on so weak a disputant,
So much to seek for reason as I am.

DE COURCI.

May I not then demand, what is this boy,
Whom you thus dignify ? this page, this lacquey,
The very topmost pitch of whose promotion
Had been to touch the stirrup of Saint Valori ?

MATILDA.

What is he !—but you question me too harshly ;
I'll answer to the King ; but to a friend
Who treats me with suspicion, I am silent.
You bid me call to memory what I am :
I hope, when thus you school me, you yourself
In your own precepts need no monitor.
I think I am as humble as I shou'd be
Under such hard correction. I acknowledge
Two powerful duties : to my husband one,
The first and strongest ; to yourself the next,

D 4

As

40 THE CARMELITE:

As my much-honour'd guest ; but I oppose
The tyranny of friendship, which would stamp
Dishonour on the worthy, and forbid
My free affections to direct their choice
Where nature warrants, and my soul approves.

[Exit.

DE COURCI alone.

Why then there's no perfection in the sex,
Or I had found it here. Farewell to grief ;
So much for tears ! tho' twenty years they flow,
They wear no channels in a widow's cheeks ;
And still the ambush'd smile lurks underneath
The watery surface, ready to start up
At the next lover's summons ; now to greet
A hero's passion, now to wed a page.

Enter Saint Valori.

SAINT VALORI.

My Lord De Courci, doth your memory serve
To recollect a certain pledge of love,
A jewel, which the lady of this house
Gave to her husband by your hands ?

DE COURCI.

A bracelet ;
She took it from her arm when they did part :
I well remember it.

SAINT VALORI.

Was it like this ?

DE COURCI.

The very same ; I gave it to Saint Valori
When he embark'd for Palestine.

SAINT VALORI.

You did :

I had it then ; your memory is perfect.

DE

A T R A G E D Y.

41

DE COURCI.

You had it then!—What must I think of this?

SAINT VALORI.

Can you this little token keep in mind,
And not remember him you gave it to?

DE COURCI.

Explain yourself; you speak in mysteries.

SAINT VALORI.

Be temperate then; let not your loud surprize
Betray me to the house: I'm here unknown.

DE COURCI.

Impossible! tho' the dead rose again,
Yet this can not be he.

SAINT VALORI.

My friend! my friend!

Come to my arms! let this embrace convince you.

DE COURCI.

Oh earth and heaven! he lives.

SAINT VALORI.

He lives indeed

To a new life of misery. Be still!
Forbear to question me: another time
Thou shalt hear all, but let this hour be sacred
To friendship's pressing call.—My wife! my wife!

DE COURCI.

Oh, my prophetic fears!

SAINT VALORI.

Unhappy woman!

For why shou'd I accuse her? twenty years
A mournful widow, and at last to start
So wide from all propriety; and now,
After so brave a struggle, now to sink
Her honour, which still bore so proud a fail

Thro'

Thro' the rough tide of time : oh bitter thought !
Oh aggravating shame !

DE COURCI.

Alas, my friend,
How shall I comfort you ? I see you point
At young Montgomeri : in friendship's right
I ask'd her private ear, and boldly urg'd
The peril of her fame.

SAIN T VALORI.

And what reply ?

DE COURCI.

Patient at first she heard ; but when I touch'd
The master-string, and set to view how base
The choice of such a minion, such a page,
Then—but 'twere painful to describe the scene,
Vain to conceal : she loves him to distraction.

SAIN T VALORI.

Can it be doubted ? She has married him.

DE COURCI.

Indeed !

SAIN T VALORI.

I have a trusty servant here,
Who saw her clasp him in her wanton arms,
Twine, like pale ivy round the polish'd bark
Of the smooth beech, whilst rapt'rous she exclaim'd,
" My hero ! my Saint Valori ! my husband ! "—
Oh, she is lost, beyond redemption lost !

DE COURCI.

Who now shall dream of constancy in woman ?
What's to be done ?—Your life dissolves the combat.

SAIN T VALORI.

That shame I've sav'd her from : Lord Hildebrand
Is dying in this house.

DE

D E C O U R C I.

Lord Hildebrand !

How many strange events are here combin'd
Of sorrow and surprize ! so thick they crowd,
So swift they change, I know not where to turn,
Nor what to counsel.

S A I N T V A L O R I.

What can counsel give ?

Can words revoke, can wisdom reconcile,
Th' indissoluble web which fate has wove ?
And shall I stay and harbour here with shame ?
Walk, like a discontented moping ghost,
To haunt and hover round their nuptial bed,
When I can die, as I have liv'd, in arms ?—
Off, holy counterfeit ! begone; disguise !

D E C O U R C I.

Stop, I conjure you : rush not on despair.

S A I N T V A L O R I.

Despair !—And have I worn the Cross so long
But as the mask and mockery of religion ?
No, 'tis the armour of a Christian knight,
And with this gauntlet I defy despair.

D E C O U R C I.

Then by that sacred symbol, by our friendship
And faithful brotherhood in God's holy service,
I do beseech thee to persist in hope :
For whilst one circumstance of doubt remains,
One, tho' the slightest fragment is afloat,
That fond credulity ere clung to, still,
Still will I keep some happy chance in view
To save thy lady's honour.

S A I N T

SAINT VALORI.

Gallant friend,

Thy counsel shall prevail, I will persist ;
And as misfortune is the world's best school
For true philosophy, I will extract
The cordial patience from the bitter root
Of this implanted pain. Come, brave De Courci !
Pleasure's gay scene, and hope's delusive dream,
Are vanish'd, lost ; love's fairy palace sinks
In the false fleeting sand on which 'twas built ;
Whilst thy immortal constancy alone
Stands in the waste, a solitary column,
To tell life's mournful traveller where once
Joy revell'd, and a stately fabric rose.

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT

A C T IV.

Enter Matilda and Lord Hildebrand.

MATILDA.

STOP, stranger! wherefore have you left your
chamber?

Will you go forth with all your wounds about you?
Return, nor rashly counteract our care,
That labours to preserve you.

HILDEBRAND.

Shall I make

Your house a grave? The wounds you see are no-
thing,
Their pain may be assuag'd by drugs and ointments;
Nature abounds in simples, that can heal
These tumours of the body.

MATILDA.

If the cure

Be, as you say, so easy, why oppose it?
Is pain your choice, that you resist our medicines,
And thus expose your rankling wounds undrest
To the raw fest'ring air?

HILDEBRAND.

Ah, generous lady!

'Tis but a superficial flattering art

To heal the skin, and make the surface whole,
 When an unsearchable and mortal sting
 Has pierc'd the nobler part.

MATILDA.

That sting is grief:
 You mourn a wife, perhaps, or some dear friend,
 In your late shipwreck lost: if it be so,
 I'll not arraign your sorrow; yet remember
 Tho' short of their allotted time they fell,
 'Twas Heav'n that struck them short; they were
 not murder'd,
 As my Saint Valori, by vile treach'rous man.

HILDEBRAND.

Oh, horror! horror!

MATILDA.

Have I touch'd the cause?
 Was there a friend? a wife?

HILDEBRAND.

Nor wife, nor friend:
 And yet—

MATILDA.

What yet? Your heart perhaps was fix'd
 Upon your freighted treasures, hoarded up
 By carking care, and a long life of thrift,
 Now without interest or redemption swallow'd
 By the devouring bankrupt waves for ever:
 What then? your cares have perish'd with your
 fortune.

HILDEBRAND.

The wreck of friends and fortune I bewail
 As things Heav'n gives and takes away at pleasure;
 Conditional enjoyments, transient loans,
 Bliss that accumulates a debt of pain:

Swift their succession, sudden their reverse.
To-day the setting sun descends in tears,
To-morrow's dawn breaks forth, and all is joy :
But guilt involves me in perpetual night ;
No morning star, no glimmering ray of hope ;
Eternal tossings on a bed of thorns,
Conscience, that raven, knelling in my ear,
And vulture furies plucking at my heart !

M A T I L D A.

Then I conjectur'd right, and 'tis remorse
Which tortures you ; I read it in your eyes.
Did that descending virtue come on earth,
To set at large the captive or the free ?
'Twas to redeem the captive : Turn to him,
Turn then, and seek your saving hope, repentance ;
Go to your Carmelite, confess to him,
Fly to your soul's physician for a cure ;
Whether with soft emollients he assuage,
Or with corrosive penances consume
The cank'rous gangrene that now gnaws your heart.

H I L D E B R A N D.

I have confess'd to him, he knows my guilt ;
But what can he, alas ! there lives but one
Under Heav'n's canopy, who can absolve.—
Hither th' immediate hand of Heav'n has led me,
Hopeless of pardon, to expire before you,
And cast your husband's murderer at your feet.

M A T I L D A.

Ah, Scorpion ! is it thou ? I shake with horror.—
Thee have I pitied ? thee have I preserv'd ?—
Monster, avaunt ! Go to the rocks for food,
Call to the winds for pity ! lay thee down

Beneath

48 THE CARMELITE:

Beneath some blighted yew, whose pois'nous leaf
Kills as it falls ; there howl thyself to death !—
Hangs the roof o'er us yet ? I am astonish'd.—
Art not ashame'd, O earth, to bear him yet ?
O sea, to cast him up again ?—Begone !

HILDEBRAND.

I do not wait for pardon, but for death :
Call to your servants ; whelm me with their swords.—
Heav'n throws me on your mercy ; you receiv'd
And gave me shelter ; hospitably tender'd
Food and restoring med'cines ; I refus'd them :
My thirst is unallay'd, my wounds undrest,
No particle of food has past my lips,
For I disdain a fraud upon your pity ;
And, where I can't have pardon, scorn support.
The only mercy I implore is death.

MATILDA.

Mercy ! and dare thy tongue pronounce the name ?—
Mercy ! thou man of blood, thou hast destroy'd it.
It came from heaven to save Saint Valori :
You saw the cherub messenger alight
From its descent ; with outspread wings it fate,
Covering his breast ; you drew your cursed steel,
And thro' the pleading angel pierc'd his heart.
Then, then the moon, by whose pale light you struck,
Turn'd fiery red, and from her angry orb
Darted contagious sickness on the earth ;
The planets in their courses shriek'd for horror ;
Heav'n dropt maternal tears.—Oh ! art thou come ?

Enter Montgomeri.

MONTGOMERI.

Why dost thou tremble ? Why this ghastly terror ?

MATILDA.

MATILDA.

Save me, support me ! In thy arms I fall :
 I mov'd not till thou cam'st, lest I had sunk
 Upon the floor, and catching at the hand
 That stabb'd Saint Valori, his touch had kill'd me.

MONTGOMERI.

That stabb'd Saint Valori ! Is this the wretch ?
 Is Hildebrand before me ?—Draw, thou traitor !
 Stand to defence, or die !

HILDEBRAND.

Behold my heart !

Strike ! I expect no mercy.

MATILDA.

Stop thine hand :

Black tho' he be, as infamy can make him,
 He is defenceless, wounded, and expiring.

HILDEBRAND.

Wilt thou not add, repentant ?—I am vanquish'd,
 Body and soul laid prostrate by despair.
 I do confess my crime : what can I more ?
 Castle, demesne, and treasure, all the spoils
 Of my accursed avarice, I resign :
 Take my life too ; dismiss me from a world
 Where I have none to mourn me, no kind hand
 To close my eyes ; of children, wife, and friends,
 (Save only this poor Carmelite) bereft ;
 Be merciful to him, he is not guilty.
 If I dare ask a little earth to cover me
 For Christian decency, I would—but that,
 That were too much—my tears will sink a grave.

MONTGOMERI.

He's deeply penitent : you'll not refuse

E

What

50 THE CARMELITE:

What he petitions for: 'twere most unchristian
To let him die without the church's rites.

MATILDA.

Forbear!

MONTGOMERY.

He's dying—see, he faints—he falls.

[Hildebrand sinks on the ground.

'Twill give him comfort in the hour of death;
And that I'd give ev'n to a murderer.

MATILDA.

You never knew your father, and in you
Pity is natural; in me 'tis treason
To breathe the air which his pollution taints;
A crime to look upon his eyes and live.

MONTGOMERY.

I feel, I feel your cause; there let him fall:
Die where he lists, but give his corpse a grave.—
And see, the Carmelite approaches.

MATILDA.

Hah!

The Lord De Courci too!—Stand by the body;
And if the wretch has breath to speak again,
Call them to witness his confession. Mark!
In Heav'n's own presence, mark this awful scene,
And write it on thy heart!—Farewell! Be constant!

[Exit Matilda.

Enter Saint Valori and De Courci.

MONTGOMERY.

Noble De Courci, and thou reverend father,
From whom the penitent in life's last hour
Draws holy comfort, look upon that wretch,
Visit his soul with peace at its departure,
And take confession from his dying lips.

SAIN

S A I N T V A L O R I.

Withdraw, and stand apart then out of hearing.

[They withdraw.

Lord Hildebrand, if thou hast sense and motion,
Reach forth thine hand.—So! If thou canst, look
up!

I am the Carmelite.

H I L D E B R A N D.

Oh, save me, save me!

I am a sinful man.

S A I N T V A L O R I.

But not a murderer:

He who speaks to you is Saint Valori.

H I L D E B R A N D.

God of my hope! is it some blessed spirit,
Or living man that speaks?

S A I N T V A L O R I.

A living man,

Saint Valori himself; no spirit.—Mark!

I grasp your hand in token of forgiveness:
Dost thou perceive it?

H I L D E B R A N D.

At my heart I feel it.—

Can you forgive me? May I die in peace?

S A I N T V A L O R I.

Lo! thus with friendly hand I close thine eyes:
Sleep, sleep! and be at rest from thy afflictions;
Wou'd mine were laid beside thee in the grave!

H I L D E B R A N D.

Oh balmy comfort! Oh, how sweet to die!—
Farewell for ever: do not quit my hand;
Let it not go, till I am dead.—Farewell!

[Dies.

SAINT VALORI.

He's dead ;—his soul forsook him with that sigh.
 Now, Sirs, return—'tis past ; I have beheld
 Religion's triumph, a repentant death.

Re-enter De Courci and Montgomeri.
 Call to your servants, and remove the body.

MONTGOMERI.

There is a charitable house hard by,
 Where on the ocean's edge a few poor monks,
 A slender brotherhood of Mercy, dwell ;
 For human misery a small asylum ;
 There often, from the foundering bark escap'd,
 The houseless wretch finds shelter, and his wounds,
 With balsams by the fathers cull'd, are dress'd :
 There we'll entomb the body.

SAINT VALORI.

Be it so !

MONTGOMERI.

You now alone survive the morning's wreck :
 You by peculiar providence are sav'd
 From a devoted vessel, which the sins
 Of its dire owner sunk ; still I must wonder
 How God's own servant with a dæmon leagu'd,
 And piety with murder cou'd embark.

SAINT VALORI.

You think he was a murderer ; have a care
 How you incline too rashly to such tales.
 Let not your vassals triumph and rejoice
 Too much o' th' sudden ; let your castle keep
 Some remnant of its old propriety :
 And you, the champion, hang not up your lance
 In token of a bloodless victory,
 But keep it, sharpen'd for a fresh encounter ;

And

And stick your valour to the test, young knight,
Lest haply some new questioner should come,
And dash your feast with horror.

MONTGOMERI.

Reverend stranger,

It will become your order to desist
From threats, which cover some mysterious meaning,
And speak without disguise. You boast yourself
Noble Saint Valori's friend, yet plead the cause
Of Hildebrand, defend him from the crime
Of murder, and with gloomy menace bid me
Expect some new appellant.—Lo! I'm ready.

SAINT VALORI.

Away, vain boy, away!

MONTGOMERI.

Vain let me be,

Not of myself, but of the cause I stand for:
The Lady of Saint Valori accounts me
Worthy to be her champion, by that title
I do impeach the memory of Lord Hildebrand;
And in the presence of this Lord, whose person
Stands for the King, arraign him as a murderer:
If any loves his memory so well
As to adopt his cause, let him stand forth,
I pledge myself to answer.

SAINT VALORI.

Lord De Courci,

Shall I reveal myself? I'm strongly tempted. [Aside.

DE COURCI.

I do protest against it; and conjure you,
Whilst he is thus in train, leave it to me
To draw confession up.

THE CARMELITE:

SAINT VALORI.

I am content.

DE COURCI.

Montgomeri, in virtue of my charge
 I've noted your defiance: should there come
 A knight of known degree to challenge it,
 Say, by what stile and title wilt thou answer?

MONTGOMERI.

Ask that of her in whose defence I stand.

DE COURCI.

We know thee for her champion; but declare,
 Hast thou no nearer name, no closer tie?

SAINT VALORI.

Answer to that.—'Tis palpable, 'tis gross:
 Your silence is confession.

MONTGOMERI.

Ah, good father,
 Have you so us'd confession as an engine
 To twist and torture silence to your purpose,
 And stain the truth with colouring not its own?

SAINT VALORI.

The man who flies to silence for evasion,
 When plainly question'd, aims at a deception
 Which candour's self will construe to condemn him.

MONTGOMERI.

Thyself a stranger, dark, inscrutable,
 With Hildebrand associate, thou to question me!—
 First answer for thyself.

SAINT VALORI.

For myself then—

DE COURCI.

Stop, recollect your thoughts!

SAINT

SAINT VALORI.

Thanks, noble Lord!—

For myself, then, I own I am your debtor
For no less gift than life; and tho' that life
Makes what you gave a gift of misery,
Yet is the gift uncancel'd.

MONTGOMERI.

Set it down

For nothing but the mutual debt of nature,
Common from man to man.—To-morrow's sun,
With favouring winds to aid us, shall transport
This castle's noble mistress and myself
Across the freight that severs this fair isle
From its maternal shore; there to renew
At Henry's feet, against this bloody man
Newly deceas'd, our criminal appeal,
Arraigning him for murder.

SAINT VALORI.

Hah! beware!

MONTGOMERI.

Who shall oppose it?

SAINT VALORI.

I; this noble witness!

Truth, and the living evidence of sight.

MONTGOMERI.

To you, my Lord De Courci, not to him,
Who is a son of peace, to you, a knight
Seal'd with the Cross, and militant for truth,
Thus I appeal.—What say you to our charge?

DE COURCI.

False, false; I pledge my life upon the proof.

MONTGOMERI.

Hah! by my father's soul, if thou shalt dare

56 THE CARMELITE:

To whisper that to-morrow—

DE COURCI.

If I dare

To whisper it!—My herald shall proclaim it;
I'll cry it in the lists.—There is my gauntlet.

[throws it down.]

SAIN T VALORI.

Hold, I forbid it— [Takes up De Courci's gauntlet.

Brother of the Cross,

Upon your knightly honour I conjure you
Put up your gauntlet: I revoke the combat.—
Hear me, young Sir, you tread upon your grave;
Fate waves the sword of vengeance o'er your head;
I've pass'd it by, and paid you life for life.
Lo! I provoke you to a gentler combat;
Behold my peaceful gauntlet!—Take this jewel,

[Gives the bracelet.]

And an hour hence, when I am on my way,
Shew it to her (what shall I call your lady?)
To her that own'd it once.

MONTGOMERI.

I will obey you.

What more have you in mind?

SAIN T VALORI.

Tell her the Monk,

Thro' all his pilgrimage from Holy Land
Preserv'd it sacred; journeying night and day,
By sea, by land, in shipwreck, in the waves,
Still guarded it with reverence more devout
Than holy relicks of departed martyrs.

Now 'tis no longer worth: 'tis her's, 'tis your's,
'Tis the next favourite's prize, a transient bauble,

The fleeting emblem of a woman's love.—

No more: farewell!—Come, gallant Lord, to
horse!

[Exit with De Courci.

MONTGOMERI.

To horse! why so a warrior would have call'd;
With such a step a warrior would have trod:
A Monk!—Mysterious man! I'll not believe it.
This jewel may unfold the labyrinth—
What then? shall I commit the clue
To sorrow's trembling hand, or firmly hold it
Till more shall be discover'd?—Time direct me!

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT

A C T V.

S C E N E I.

A Chapel with an Altar decorated with the funeral Tropies of Saint Valori. Matilda is discovered kneeling at the Altar. Montgomeri enters, and, after a Pause, speaks.

MONTGOMERI.

STILL at the altar! Ever on her knees—
Nothing but peace! peace to her husband's soul!
Perpetual requiems.—If, as we believe,
Th' uncircumscribed spirit of a man
Walks after death, till it can find a grave,
Or holy church, with soul-compelling hymns,
Shall chaunt it to repose, I am amaz'd
My father's ghost, whilst unappeas'd by prayer,
Ne'er took it's shadowy journey to this spot.
Why, when De Courci and the Monk outfac'd me,
Did he not then arise with all his wounds,
And scare them to confession? I am lost,
Bewilder'd, and perplex'd! But see! she moves—

[Matilda arises, and comes down
from the Altar to Montgomeri.

MATILDA.

MATILDA.

My son! my joy! my blessing!

MONTGOMERI.

Whence is this?

What sudden transformation? By my hopes,
There is a joyful emanation round thee,
That strikes a gleam of rapture to my heart.—
What angel of good tidings hath been with thee?
Who hath exorcis'd thy despair, and breath'd
This beam of placid pleasure in thine eyes?

MATILDA.

Thy father hath been with me.

MONTGOMERI.

Heav'ns! my father!

MATILDA.

I've seen him in my vision; commun'd with him
Before the altar: soft his accents fell,
Like voices of departed friends heard in our dreams,
Or music in the air, when the night-spirits
Warble their magic minstrelsy.

MONTGOMERI.

Indeed!

Wou'd I had seen him too!

MATILDA.

Wou'd Heav'n thou hadst!

MONTGOMERI.

What was his form?

MATILDA.

Majestically sweet

He smil'd upon me; strait thro' all my veins
Methought I felt a thrilling virtue run,
Healing, where'er it cours'd, both heart and brain.

MONTGOMERI.

MONTGOMERI.

Saw you no wounds about him?

MATILDA.

None, no wounds;

Nor was he in his youth, as when he died,
 But grey with years, and much transform'd by time:
 At first I knew him not, and as he spoke
 So chang'd methought he was, with pain I trac'd
 The faded record.

MONTGOMERI.

Spoke he of his murder?

MATILDA.

Oh! not a word; but as it ne'er had been,
 And he were living now, so look'd and spoke.

MONTGOMERI.

'Tis strange!—One question more—Say, did this form
 Ne'er visit you before?

MATILDA.

Never, till now,

MONTGOMERI.

Nor this, nor any other shape?

MATILDA.

Oh! never, never.

MONTGOMERI.

Then, then I own my confidence is shaken;
 And fit it is no longer to conceal
 What I have newly heard so boldly vouch'd,
 That my faith reels.

MATILDA.

Speak, I conjure thee, speak!

MONTGOMERI.

I came this instant from the Carmelite
 And Lord De Courci: on the floor was stretch'd
 The

A T R A G E D Y. 61

The breathless corpse of Hildebrand ; the Monk
In his last moments had been private with him :
I urg'd the murder, to his own confession
Appealing in my accusation's proof ;
When, strange to tell ! his confessor the Monk
Boldly denied that he had kill'd Saint Valori.
Rous'd at this daring insult, and indignant,
I turn'd upon De Courci, and demanded
If he wou'd vouch the falsehood : he, more hot
And no less confident than t'other, hurl'd
Defiance in my teeth, and to the ground
Threw down his gauntlet, pledging to the truth
Of what the Monk affirm'd.

M A T I L D A.

I am amaz'd ;
There is a trembling expectation in me,
That by some secret impulse draws me on
To the great revelation of my fate :
Therefore proceed !

M O N T G O M E R Y.

Before I could reply,
The Carmelite had seiz'd De Courci's pledge,
And with a tone and gesture more befitting
A haughty warrior than a son of peace,
Sternly forbade the challenge to proceed :
Then with a mournful action turning tow'rds me,
And sighing, drew from forth his bosom this,
This pearly chain. [Produces the bracelet.]

M A T I L D A.

Ah !—Do my eyes betray me ?—
Help, help ! uphold me, whilst I look upon it.—
The same ; the same ! I gave it to my husband ;
My last, fond, parting pledge : guide, guide my hands,

My

My trembling hands to touch it.—Sacred reliqu !
 Enthusiastic as the pilgrim's kiss,
 Thus to my lips I press thee. Hail, thrice hail !—
 To thee, O altar, with these banners deck'd,
 Hallow'd with daily incense, and besieg'd
 With never-ceasing requiems for his soul,
 I dedicate this trophy of my love !—
 Lead me, my son !

MONTGOMERI.

Oh ! do'st thou love thy son ?

MATILDA.

Love thee ! O Heaven ! [Falls on his neck weeping.

MONTGOMERI.

By that then I conjure thee
 Come to thy couch ! Now, as thy cheek turns pale,
 Convulsion shakes thy lip, and the full stream
 Bursts from thine eyes, return not to the altar :
 Let me conduct thee forth.

MATILDA.

Where, where's the Monk ?

Shall I not see him ?

MONTGOMERI.

Yes, thou suffering saint !
 Be patient for a while, and thou shalt see him.

MATILDA.

Come then, dispose of me as to thy love
 And piety seems best : I will obey.
 Let me have this—Thou wilt not take this from me.

[Holding the bracelet.

MONTGOMERI.

Not for the worth of all this world.

MATILDA.

I thank thee. [Exeunt.

Enter Saint Valori, De Courci, and Gyfford.

S A I N T V A L O R I.

Suffer this last one weakness.—Hah! she's gone;
The chapel is deserted: I had hop'd
Once more to have look'd upon her ere we parted.

D E C O U R C I.

'Tis better as it is.

S A I N T V A L O R I.

It may be so;

And yet 'twere stern philosophy, methinks,
That could refuse the sight one short indulgence,
Ere the heart breaks with sorrow.

D E C O U R C I.

I am pain'd

To see this tender sorrow swell so fast.

S A I N T V A L O R I.

Oh! call to mind how I have lov'd this woman!
Gyfford, thou know'st it: say, thou faithful servant,
What was my passion; how did absence feed it?
But how can't thou compute my sum of sorrows?
Years upon years have roll'd since thou wast with me:
Time hath been wearied with my groans, my tears
Have damp'd his wings, till he scarce crept along;
The unpitying sun ne'er wink'd upon my toils;
All day I dragg'd my slavery's chain, all night
Howl'd to its clanking on my bed of straw;
And yet these pains were recreation now,
To those I feel, whilst I resign Matilda.

G Y F F O R D.

Stay then, my noble master, here abide,
And to this awful place convoke your Lady.

S A I N T

SAINT VALORI.

This awful place ! she'll visit it no more ;
 Or, if she does, 'twill be to strip these trappings ;
 These mockeries shall come down, they've had their
 day,

They've serv'd the uses of hypocrisy,
 And festive garlands now shall fill their place
 Around this nuptial altar.

DE COURCI.

No, my friend,

I am a witness to her unfeign'd sorrows ;
 And were I left to judge of them unbiass'd
 By what I saw besides, I should believe
 She were the very mirror of her sex
 For matchless constancy.

SAINT VALORI.

You rend my heart.

GYFFORD.

Thrice on her knees this morning hath she wash'd
 This altar's feet with tears, and with her prayers
 Sent up a mingled cry of sighs and groans.

SAINT VALORI.

Why then, old man, did'st thou distract my soul
 With gossip tales to slander her fair fame,
 And murder my repose ? If thou art conscious
 Of having wrong'd her, get thee hence, begone !
 Fall at her feet for pardon, howl for pity,
 And hide thyself where light may never find thee.

GYFFORD.

With grief, but not with shame, I will retire
 From thee and light.—I have not wrong'd the truth.

SAINT VALORI.

Stay, Gyfford, stay, thou loyal, good old man !

Pity

Pity thy master, and forgive my phrenzy.
Lo ! I am calm again : the pledge I've given
To young Montgomeri shall be the test :
Yes, with that chain I'll draw her to the proof ;
Link'd and entwin'd about her heart I'll hold it,
And tent her nature to its inmost feelings.—
See, the young favorite comes !

Enter Montgomeri.

M O N T G O M E R I.

Oh ! timely found,

Well are you thus encounter'd, holy Sir !
The lady of Saint Valori demands you ;
And lo ! where she advances.

Enter Matilda,

M A T I L D A.

Hah ! 'tis well.

In presence of this altar we are met :
And may the sacred genius of the place
Prosper our interview !

S A I N T V A L O R I.

Amen ! amen !

M A T I L D A.

Good friends, withdraw ! let none approach the
chapel

Whilst we are private.—Now be firm, my heart !

[*They go out—she pauses some time, and then
addresses herself to Saint Valori.*]

Father, I thank you !—I've receiv'd your pledge,
The small, but prizeless relick you have brought me.
The bracelet, given by Lord De Courci's hands
In times long past (fie, fie upon these tears,

F

They

They will have way !) to a departed friend.
 Perhaps he priz'd this trifle—but alas !
 'Tis fated, like the arm from which 'twas taken,
 Never to clasp him more.

SAINT VALORI.

Alas ! I fear it.

MATILDA.

I hope De Courci gave it to my lord.

SAINT VALORI.

He did : I saw him give it.

MATILDA.

Hah ! you saw him !

SAINT VALORI.

When he embark'd for Palestine ; I've told you
 We never march'd apart. I wore the Cross
 In those fame-seeking days.

MATILDA.

I do remember.—

And this poor favour, did my hero wear it ?

SAINT VALORI.

Devoutly, at his heart.

MATILDA.

Then, then indeed

Thou hast bestow'd a treasure.—Welcome, welcome !

*[As she is pressing it to her heart,**St. Valori, observing her agitation, runs to her assistance.*

SAINT VALORI.

He wore it like an amulet ; with this
 Before his heart, first thro' the yawning breach
 Thy sacred walls, Jerusalem, he storm'd ;
 Tore down the moony standard, where it hung
 In impious triumph ; thrice their Pagan swords

Shiver'd

Shiver'd his mailed crest, as many times
That sacred amulet was dy'd in blood
Nearest his heart.

MATILDA.

Stop there! I charge thee, stop!
Tell me no more: Oh, follow him no further,
For see, th' accursed Pyrenæans rise,
Streaming with blood; there hellish murder howls;
There madness rages, and with haggard eyes
Glares in the craggy pass!—She'll spring upon me
If I advance. Oh, shield me from the sight!

SAINT VALORI.

Be calm, collect thyself: it was not there,
It was not there Saint Valori met his death.
'Twas not the sword of Hildebrand that slew him;
Tho' pierc'd with wounds, that ambush he surviv'd.

MATILDA.

What do I hear? Oh, look upon this altar!
Think where you stand, and do not wrong the truth.

SAINT VALORI.

He who is truth itself be witness for me!—
Deep was the stroke that dire assassin gave,
Yet short of life it stopt; unhors'd and fall'n,
Welt'ring in blood, your wounded husband lay,
Till haply found by charitable strangers
Journeying to Venice, he was heal'd, restor'd;
And, thence embarking, by a barbarous rover
Was captur'd.—Start not; but repress your terrors.

MATILDA.

Admire not that I tremble; marvel rather
That I hear this and live.—Saint Valori captur'd!
The bravest captain of the Cross enslav'd
By barbarous Pagans!

SAINT VALORI.

Tedious years he suffer'd
Of hard captivity—

MATILDA.

Oh, where, ye Heavens !
Where was your justice then ?—And died he there ?

SAINT VALORI.

’Twas not his lot to find a distant grave.

MATILDA.

Where, where ?—oh, speak ! release me from the
rack !—

Where did my hero fall ?

SAINT VALORI.

Where did he fall !—
Nor Pagan swords, nor slavery's galling chain,
Nor murderers daggers, Afric's burning clime,
Toils, storms, nor shipwreck, kill'd him—here he fell !
Grief burst his heart—here in this spot he fell !

[He falls to the ground.

MATILDA.

Ah, horror, horror !—Help, for mercy, help !—
My son, my son ! your father lies before you.

Montgomeri runs in, followed by De Courci and
Gyfford.

MONTGOMERI.

My father ! Heav'n and earth ! Oh, save him ; save
him !

Where shall I turn ? See, see ! she faints, she falls !

[Supports her in his arms.

DE COURCI.

He is her son.—Awake, look up, my friend !
Live, live ! De Courci bids Saint Valori live.

Your

Your rival is your son.

S A I N T V A L O R I *raising himself on his knee,*
unsheathes his dagger.

Off! give me way:

I'll kill him in her arms.

D E C O U R C I.

He is your son—

Hear me, thou frantic father! I, De Courci,
I speak to you.—Would you destroy your son?

S A I N T V A L O R I.

Bind up his wounds. Oh, if I've slain my son,
Perdition will not own me!

M O N T G O M E R Y.

He revives.

Nature awakens reason.—Hush! be still.
She stirs.—Withold him from her arms a while;
Let all be silence, whilst disposing Heaven,
That showers this joy, shall fit them to receive it.

M A T I L D A.

How could you say my husband is alive?
Which of you keeps him from me?—Oh! 'tis
cruel!

S A I N T V A L O R I.

Uncase me of my weeds; tear off my cowl!
Now, now she'll know me; now I am Saint Valori.

[*Throws off his habit, and appears in armour.*

M A T I L D A.

Stand off! Oh, blessed light of Heav'n, shine forth!
Visit my aching eyes, ye solar beams,
And let me see my hero!—Hah! the Cross—
He gleams—he glimmers;—like a mist he rises.—
He lives! he lives! I clasp him in my arms.

My

70 THE CARMELITE:

My lost Saint Valori! my long-lost husband!

[Runs into his arms.

SAIN T VALORI.

Oh my heart's joy! do I again embrace thee?
Soul of all honour, constancy, and truth!

MATILDA.

This transport is too quick, it melts my brain;—
The sky runs round; the earth is all in motion;—
Nay, now it whirls too fast.

SAIN T VALORI.

Ye saints in bliss!

Heroic matrons! Ye angelic virtues,
Protect your fair resemblance!—Hah! she weeps!—
Kind tears, I thank you! Nature's soft relief,
Waters, that from the soul's full fount run o'er,
To joy or grief welcome alike ye flow,
Assist our patience, and assuage our pain.

MATILDA.

Alas! alas! that I shou'd know thee not.—
What ravages have time and sorrow made
In Heav'n's most perfect work, the fairest temple
Nature e'er rear'd in majesty and grace!

SAIN T VALORI.

What dire calamity have we escap'd!
Now 'tis dispers'd, the mists of doubt are fled,
Truth, like the sun, breaks forth, and all is joy.—
My son! my son! oh, throw my arms about him,
And let me cling for ever to his neck!

MONTGOMERI.

Oh sympathetic energy of nature!—
This morn a nameless orphan, now the son
Of living parents: he for virtue fam'd,

A T R A G E D Y.

71

For dignity of soul, and matchless courage ;
She for affection, constancy renown'd,
Inspir'd with truth, with every grace adorn'd,
A woman's fondness, and an angel's faith.

M A T I L D A.

Heaven hear my praises ! echo them, O earth !
Cherubs, that come with healing on your wings,
Waft my thanksgiving back !—Bright beam of
mercy !

Visit the inmost chambers of my heart ;
And where grief rear'd a husband's monument
Fix now his living image : there, as time
Shook not the faithful witness from my soul,
When grief assail'd it, so in joy support me,
And guard my constancy in both extremes.

F I N I S.

E P I L O G U E

By the A U T H O R.

Spoken by Mrs. S I D D O N S.

LADIES, we now have shewn a faithful wife,

And trust our scene prevails in real life;

We hope that nuptial truth's your reigning passion,

If not—why let the stage begin the fashion:

'Tis ours to paint you innocent and true;

To be what we describe depends on you.—

Two tragic masters grac'd th' Athenian stage,

One sketch'd with candour, t'other dash'd with rage;

Old Sophocles's dames were heavenly creatures,

His rival drew them all in fury features;

Both err'd, perhaps.—The milder urg'd this plea,

" I paint my women as they ought to be."

The angry bard, relentless to the Fair,

Sternly replied, " I paint mine as they are."

Our Author (pardon if he brings his name

Too near to those of an immortal fame)

At humble distance takes the milder plan,

Less proud to be a poet than a man:

Scorns first to forge and then enforce a crime,

Or polish libels into truth by rhyme.

If you have faults, alas! he bids me say,

Oh! that his wish cou'd charm them all away!

For if no cure but caustics can be found,

He will not make a sore to heal a wound;

If you have faults, they're faults he won't discover,

To your own sex he begs to bind you over.

So many ladies now there are who write, -

You'll hear of all your trips some winter's night:

Since Pegasus has learn'd the jadish trick

To bear a side-saddle, you'll find him kick.

But let no satyrift touch my lips with gall,

Lips from which none but grateful words shall fall.

Can I forget?—But I must here be dumb,

So vast my debt, I cannot count the sum;

Words would but fail me, and I claim no art,

I boast no eloquence—but of the heart.

CSW 32